

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1 - 12 cancelled

13. (New) A process for preparing an ester of the formula  $R^1CFHC(O)OR^2$  or a diester of the formula  $R^3OC(O)CFHC(O)OR^3$

wherein

$R^1$  is F, C1-C5-alkyl or C1-C5-alkyl which is substituted by at least 1 fluorine atom;

$R^2$  is C1-C5-alkyl or C1-C5-alkyl which is substituted by at least 1 fluorine atom;

$R^3$  is C1-C5-alkyl or C1-C5-alkyl which is substituted by at least 1 fluorine atom,

which comprises preparing the ester or diester from a  $CF_nXC(O)$  group and zinc in the presence of an alcohol as a proton source, where n is 1 or 2 and X is chlorine, by exchanging X for hydrogen, excluding compounds which are substituted by X both in the  $\alpha$ -position and in the  $\beta$ -position.

14. (New) The process according to Claim 13, wherein  $R^1$  is F or C1-C3 which is part-fluorinated or perfluorinated.

15. (New) The process according to Claim 13, wherein  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  are each methyl, ethyl, n-propyl or isopropyl.

16. (New) The process according to Claim 13, wherein  $R^1$  is F or  $CF_3$ .

17. (New) The process according to Claim 13, wherein the alcohol corresponds to the  $R^2$  or  $R^3$  radical.

18. (New) The process according to Claim 13, wherein the ester is prepared in situ from acid chloride and alcohol.

19. (New) The process according to Claim 13, wherein the reaction product is added as a solvent.
20. (New) The process according to Claim 19, wherein the azeotrope of methyl difluoroacetate and methanol, which acts as a solvent and optionally as a proton source, is added in the preparation of methyl difluoroacetate.
21. (New) An azeotrope of methyl difluoroacetate and methanol with a constant boiling point of 64 °C at ambient pressure.